

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 ICA-11 PC-01 EB-08
TRSE-00 XMB-02 OES-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
/099 W

-----129942 090649Z /23

R 080619Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY KIGALI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6214
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
EMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA 1800
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KIGALI 869

DEPT PASS AID/ICA/PC

KINSHASA ALSO PASS BUKAVU

NAIROBI FOR REDSO/EA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ECIN, PEPR, RW
SUBJECT: TRENDS IN RWANDA - MAY 1978: RWANDAN ASSESSES TIES
WITH NEIGHBORS

1. SUMMARY: NYERE'S STRIKINGLY WARM THREE-DAY
VISIT REINFORCES IMPRESSION THAT RWANDA AND
TANZANIA MAKING PROGRESS TOWARD CLOSER POLITICAL/
ECONOMIC TIES. WHILE RWANDA SEES ITS SECURITY
INTERESTS CLOSELY LINKED WITH ZAIRE, LONG-TERM
ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES ARE ANTICIPATED FROM DEVELOPING
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SIMILARLY CLOSE RELATIONS WITH TANZANIA. MEMBER-
SHIP IN CEPGL WITH BURUNDI AND ZAIRE AND IN AKAGEERA
BASIN COMMISSION WITH BURUNDI AND TANZANIA, BOTH
OF WHICH LACK MEANS AS YET TO CARRY OUT IMPORTANT
PROJECTS, OFFERS HOPE OF INSTITUTIONALIZED ASSOCIATION
WITH EACH OF THESE "BIG BROTHER" COUNTRIES LEADING TO
BETTER PROSPECTS FOR PEACE, STABILITY, AND ECONOMIC

PROGRESS. GOR MAKES SINCERE EFFORT TO NURTURE
GREATER REGIONALISM TO OVERCOME DISADVANTAGES OF
BEING REMOTE AND LANDLOCKED. END SUMMARY.

2. THE NYERERE VISIT -- IMPROVING THE ANGLOPHONE CONNECTION:

WHILE THINGS WERE LOOKING GLOOMY IN NEARBY ZAIRE, PROSPECTS
FOR TIES WITH ANGLOPHONE TANZANIA BRIGHTENED IN MAY.
PRESIDENT NYERERE PAID RWANDA A THREE-DAY GOODWILL
VISIT -- HIS SECOND IN NINE MONTHS. VISIT SURPASSED
USUAL LEVEL OF CORIDALITY AND MARKED IMPORTANT STEP
IN ONGOING PROCESS OF STRENGTHENING RELATIONS.

NYERERE NOTDD THAT CLOSE BILATERAL TIES WITM ZAIRE/
BURUNDI DID NOT PROCLUDE RWANDA FROM PURSUING PROFITABLE
TIES WITH TANZANIA. AS OFFICIAL JOINT COMMUNIQUE
OBSERVED, POTENTIAL FRUITS OF CLOSER COOPERATION
ARE SUBSTANTIAL. FOR EXAMPLE, RUSUMO-ISAKA ROAD,
FOR WHICH RWANDA/TANZANIA HAVE ALREADY SECURED TWO-
THIRDS FINANCING FROM EEC DEVELOPMENT FUND AND WORLD BANK, COULD
LESSEN LANDLOCKED RWANDA'S SERIOUS TRANSPORTATION
PROBLEMS. THE AKAGERA RIVER BASIN DAM, ANOTHER GOOD
PROSPECTIVE AREA OF COOPERATION, HAS MOVED PAST THE
TECHNICAL DESIGN STAGE AND SPONSORS RWANDA/BURUNDI/
TANZANIA (THROUGH THEIR AKAGERA BASIN COMMISSIONIARE
SEEKING FINANCING.
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RESPONDING TO GOR INITIATIVE OF LAST YEAR, NYERERE ALSO
DECLARED TANZANIA READY TO ACCEPT AS MANY AS 500,000 RWANDAN
IMMIGRANTS IN SPARSELY POPULATED WESTERN TANZANIA.
ALTHOUGH SOME GOR LEADERS ARE SKEPTICAL OF MASS EMIGRATION,
BURDEN OF INCREASING DEMOGRAPHIC PRESSURES MAY HASTEN
THIS RESETTLEMENT SCHEME AS ONE OF SEVERAL OFFICIAL
RESPONSES TO ALARMING DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS. COSTS WILL
UNDOUBTEDLY PRESENT PROBLEM FOR IMPLEMENTATION AFTER PROGRAM
IS ELABORATED MORE PRECISELY.

3. CLOSE RELATIONS WITH BOTH ZAIRE AND TANZANIA? A GOOD IDEA:

FONMIN NSEKALIJE SAYS PRIVATELY THAT RWANDA MILITARY
LEADERS SEE COUNTRY'S SECURITY CLOSELY LINKED TO KIVU AND SHABA
REGIONS OF ZAIRE. ORIENTATION TOWARD KINSHASA GOES BACK TO
COLONIAL PERIOD, WHEN RWANDA BECAME BELGIAN MANDATE TERRITORY.
"BIG BROTHER" IMAGE PERSISTS ESPECIALLY AMONG TOP RWANDAN
ARMY OFFICERS WHO WERE TRAINED IN CONGO AND IN BELGIAN
MILITARY SCHOOLS. TROUBLES IN CONGO TENDED TO OVERFLOW
INTO RWANDA DURING YP'S IN FORM OF REFUGEES, INSTABILITY,
AND IN 1967 A FLEEING MERCENARY FORCE. ALTHOUGH ACUTELY AWARE OF

MOBUTU'S SHOROCOMINGS, GOR GIVES HIM CREDIT FOR ASSURING
SECURITY OF RWANDA'S WESTERN FLANK. RWANDAS COUNT ON HIM
HEAVILY TO KEEP ZAIRIAN POT FROM OILING OVER.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KIGALI 869

PEVERTHELESS, RECENT EVENTS IN ZAIRE -- BOTH FEBRUARY
COUP PLOT AND SHABA II -- MUST HAVE STIMULATED
REFLECTION BY RWANDAN LEADERS ON FUTURE OF THIS
SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP. THEY ARE RELATIVELY COMFORTABLE
WITH MOBUTU BUT ALSO AWARE THAT HIS HOLD ON POWER
IS PROBLEMATIC. THEY ARE REASSURED THAT WESTERN
POWERS CAME TO HIS AID AT TIME OF CRISIS, BUT HAVE
MISGIVINGS ABOUT MANNER, PUBLIC JUSTIFICATIONS, AND
IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE OF THAT HELP. MISGIVINGS
ARE INTENSIFIED BY AMBIVALENCE ABOUT EX-COLONIAL WHITE
MILITARY PERSONNEL ASSERTING THEMSELVES AND BAILING
OUT WEAK REGIME, SO MANY YEARS AFTER INDEPENDENCE.
FURTHERMORE, THEY CANNOT FAIL TO APPRECIATE THAT
MOBUTU'S AND ZAIRE'S FUTURES REMAIN FULL OF UNCERTAINTY.
RWANDA NEEDS OTHER GOOD FRIENDS IN ADDITION TO ZAIRE.

BURUNDI DOES NOT OFFER POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO RWANDA
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THAT ZAIRE DOES, BUT IT ALWAYS LOOMS AS MOST LIKELY
THREAT TO SECURITY. EFFORTS AT COOPERATION, ESPECIALLY
THROUGH CEPGL, HAVE BROUGHT PROGRESS, BUT RWANDAN NERVOUS-
NESS STILL MANIFESTS ITSELF AT SLIGHTEST
EXCUSE. SINCE CUBA ESTABLISHED EMBASSY
IN BUJUMBURA THIS MARCH, RUMOR MILL HAS WORKED OVERTIME
BUILDING UP STORIES OF PURPORTED
MISHCHIEF IN BURUNDI ULTIMATELY DIRECTED AGAINST RWANDA.

TREND OF PAST 18 MONTHS HAS BEEN TOWARD CLOSER CONTACTS
WITH TANZANIA, EVEN WITHOUT ZAIRE TROUBLES.
LONG-TERM ECONOMIC INTERESTS ARE SERVED THEREBY,
AS STATED ABOVE. POLITICALLY IT MAKES GOOD
SENSE TOO, NOT AS ALTERNATIVE TO ZAIRE BUT AS ADDITIONAL
STRING IN RWANDA'S LITTLE BOW.

EMPHASIS IN JOINT COMMUNIQUE AT END OF NYERERE VISIT
ON "CONVERGENCE" IN ORIENTATIONS OF RWANDA'S MRND
AND TANZANIA'S REVOLUTIONARY PARTY SHOWS WILLINGNESS
TO ASSOCIATE INTERNAL POLICIES. AND RWANDA AND
TANZANIA BOTH STAND TO BENEFIT BY COORDINATING ON
INTERNATIONAL ISSUES -- WHERE THEY HAVE NO SERIOUS
DIFFERENCES ANYWAY. TO FROST CAKE, TANZANIA OPENED
EMBASSY IN KIGALI AFTER NYERERE VISIT, HEADED BY
RESIDENT CHARGE D'AFFAIRES.

4. AND THE CEPGL KEEPS GENERATING REGIONAL COOPERATION IDEAS.

RWANDA LOOKS TOWARD THE CEPGL (ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF
GREAT LAKES COUNTRIES: ZAIRE, BURUNDI, RWANDA) AS BEST MEANS OF
LESSENING REGIONAL TENSIONS AND PROMOTING ECONOMIC GROWTH
THROUGH INTENSIFIED COOPERATION. CONCEIVED IN LATE 60'S AS A
SECURITY GROUPING, THE ORGANIZATION HAS REALLY BEGUN TAKING FORM ONLY
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IN PAST YEAR AS POTENTIAL REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CHANNEL.
LACK OF FINANCIAL AND OTHER BASIC RESOURCES (AND PERHAPS
LACK OF POLITICAL WILL BY ZAIRE AND BURUNDI) HAVE KEPT CEPGL FROM
SHOWING IMPORTANT RESULTS THUS FAR, BUT CONTACTS AND
MEETINGS CONTINUE TO GENERATE IDEAS AND THE APPEARANCE OF
VIGOR. AT MAY 12-13 MINISTERIAL LEVEL MEETING OF COMMISSION
ON PUBLIC WORKS, FIVE MAJOR ROAD PROJECTS WERE APPROVED
IN PRINCIPLE:

--BUKAVU-WALIKALE-KISANGANI (ALL IN ZAIRE);
--RUGOMBO (BURUNDI) - BUARAMA (RWANDA);

--BUTARE (RWANDA) - BUKAVU (ZAIRE);
--RUSUMO (RWANDA) - MUHINGA - NGOZI (BOTH BURUNDI);
AND
--RUSUMO (RWANDA) - ISAKA (TANZANIA).

CURIOSLY, LAST OF THESE PROJECTS, THE ONLY ONE REACHING
OUTSIDE THE CEPGL COUNTRIES, IS ALSO ONLY ONE FOR WHICH
PARTIAL FINANCING ALREADY ASSURED. COMMISSION ALSO
SUPPORTED A NUMBER OF OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE POLICIES, INCLUDING
EFFORTS TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO INDIAN OCEAN PORTS, INTERCONNECTION OF
NATIONAL ELECTRIC SYSTEMS, AND COOPERATION ON POSTAL MATTERS,
TELEPHONE/TELEGRAPH, AND DRAINAGE AND IRRIGATION. PERHAPS
PROJECT LIST IS OVERLY-AMBITIOUS AND UNREALISTIC, BUT IT
SIGNALS WILLINGNESS TO COORDINATE DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS.

5. RWANDA'S POSITION: MORE FRIENDS IS BETTER THAN LESS:

GOR FEELS STRONGLY THAT IT NEEDS CLOSE TIES TO A
STABLE ZAIRE, BU CLOSE TIES TO TANZANIA ALSO OFFER
POTENTIALLY IMPORTANT BENEFITS. HAVING LITTLE OF
MONETARY OR STRATEGIC VALUE TO OFFER EITHER GIANT NEIGHBOR,
RWANDANS MAKE THEMSELVES AGREEABLE IN SMALL WAYS WHENEVER
POSSIBLE. ONE USEFUL FUNCTION THEY HAVE BEGUN TO PERFORM
WITH SOME SKILL IS BRINGING OTHERS TOGETHER TO PURSUE
MUTUAL INTERESTS IN COMMON. THE CEPGL AND THE AKAGERA
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BASIN COMMISSION, EMBRYONIC AND WILL-O-THE-WISH AS THEY
EACH ARE, ARE THE MOST PROMISING FIRST FRUITSO
THAT POLICY.
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